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[www.health.ri.gov](http://www.health.ri.gov)

## Interim Health Advisory for Summer Camps

Date: June 1, 2009  
To: Summer Camp Organizers  
From: Director of Health, David R. Gifford, MD, MPH  
Re: **Summer Camps & H1N1 Virus - Updated**

To reduce the spread of H1N1 infection in camp settings, the Rhode Island Department of Health (HEALTH) recommends the following:

- Screen people upon arrival at camp. Physical assessment may not be necessary but, at minimum, everyone should be asked if they have flu-like symptoms (fever and cough or sore throat).
  - In the event that a camper has been exposed to a sick person with flu-like symptoms in the past week, the camper can stay at camp. If the camper starts to develop flu-like symptoms, the camper should stay at home for seven days from onset of symptoms or until symptoms have ended for at least 24 hours, whichever is longer.
- Camp organizers should remind staff and campers to use good hygiene practices consistently, including:
  - Wash hands often with soap and warm water. If soap and water are not available, use alcohol-based hand gel (with 60% alcohol content).
  - Cough and sneeze into elbow.
  - Limit personal contact (handshaking, hugging, kissing).
  - Carry travel-size hand sanitizer in camp bags.
- Camp organizers should:
  - Have hand washing stations and hand sanitizer (with 60% alcohol content) at all areas where campers congregate.
  - Provide on-site medical assessment.
  - Reduce crowding.
- Counselors and staff should be given a brief training on monitoring campers and recognizing flu-like symptoms (fever and cough or sore throat in the absence of a known cause other than influenza).
- Day Camp Guidelines for Campers/Staff with Flu-Like Symptoms (fever and cough or sore throat):
  - Day campers/staff with flu-like symptoms should stay home and remain away from camp for 7 days after the onset of symptoms or 24 hours after symptoms have resolved, whichever is longer.
  - Follow Overnight Camp Guidelines for Campers/Staff with Flu-Like Symptoms below for guidance on campers awaiting arrangement to go home.

- Overnight Camp Guidelines for Campers/Staff with Flu-Like Symptoms (fever and cough or sore throat):
  - Overnight campers/staff who exhibit flu-like symptoms should remain separated from other campers/staff in the camp infirmary or at home for 7 days after the onset of illness or at least 24 hours after symptoms have resolved, whichever is longer.
  - An ill camper should avoid crowded settings at the camp; but, if unavoidable, the camper should wear a face mask (or similar cloth that would decrease the spread of droplets with coughing) to cover any coughing and/or sneezing.
  - If prolonged face-to-face exposure to a sick camper is necessary, a camp nurse or staff person should wear a surgical mask during that time and, if possible, only one staff person should be assigned to that camper.
  - Extra precaution should be used if procedures that are likely to generate aerosols (such as administering nebulized solutions) are not able to be postponed until a camper returns home. (See [Interim Health Advisory about Use of Masks](#)).
  - If possible, campers/staff with flu-like symptoms who wish to seek medical care should contact their healthcare provider or camp-related health services organization to report illness by telephone or other remote means before seeking care.
  - Camp nurses or those caring for ill campers/staff should follow guidance developed for caring for sick persons at home. (See [Interim Guidance for H1N1 Flu \(Swine Flu\): Taking Care of a Sick Person in Your Home](#)).
- **Report any clusters of 2 or more campers with flu-like symptoms to HEALTH at 222-2577.**
- For more camp-specific information related to the H1N1 virus, please see the Association of Camp Nurses website (<http://www.acn.org/healthalert/swineflu.html>).

Health Center activity should be monitored for signs of emerging sickness. Healthcare staff often see people for common things: sore throats, upset stomachs, coughs, various rashes, and red eyes. Often benign, these signs and symptoms could also signal an emerging sickness. A sick person with flu-like symptoms is defined as having a fever, in addition to cough and/or sore throat in the absence of a known cause other than influenza.

## Resources

CDC H1N1 Influenza Site: <http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu>

Rhode Island Department of Health Swine Influenza Site:

<http://www.health.ri.gov/pandemicinfluenza/swineinfluenza/swineinfluenza.php>

WHO Swine Influenza Site: <http://www.who.int/en/>